

**Interagency Unity of Effort**  
**The Strategic Interagency Coordination Center**  
**(STRIACC)**

by

Joseph E. Maher, Jr.  
COL, USA

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## ABSTRACT

Transnational terrorism, as well as other forms of international crime, affects domestic, regional, and global stability. The magnitude, geographical dispersion, and unknown relationships between various transnational threats are such that no one department, agency, or staff has the sufficient resources or expertise to comprehend and respond to all requirements. As our challenges are expanding in size and scope, so too, must our interagency processes be flexible, adaptive, and efficient. To that end, we must develop a system that provides responsive interagency intelligence and information to the appropriate federal departments and agencies. The system must be standardized and enforceable within the federal bureaucracy so as to enhance unity of effort, yet must never impinge on the authority of elected or appointed officials. A responsive interagency system that is proficient in both deliberate and crisis action planning is the only method of leveraging all appropriate government assets necessary to engage the full depth and breadth of our national security threats.

The purpose of this research paper, then, is to provide an analysis of the interagency process at the strategic level—from the origins of its inefficiencies to recommendations that directly impact systemic faults. Through historical analysis, this paper will demonstrate that the problems residing within the U.S. federal interagency system are not new, but rather, consistent throughout the timeframe examined. Consequently, recommendations applied to interagency inefficiencies must take into account many of the historical issues that have set the conditions for interagency coordination failures in the past.

In the end, interagency coordination is about people, organizations, and processes. And only by analyzing interagency problems in the combined context of people, organizations, and processes can we begin to understand the depth and synthesis of the remedies required.

## Biography

Colonel Joseph E. Maher, Jr is currently a student at the Air war College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. A career Army aviator, he has conducted combat operations throughout Central America, the Balkans, and the Middle East. He has also conducted support operations throughout Africa and Europe. His command tours include assignments in Europe and the Middle East. COL Maher is qualified in attack, assault, and observation helicopters. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Philosophy from the University of Massachusetts, and a Master of Science in Management from St Mary's College. Contact: [joseph.maher@us.army.mil](mailto:joseph.maher@us.army.mil) or [joseph.maher@maxwell.af.mil](mailto:joseph.maher@maxwell.af.mil) Cell: 678-471-6712

## **Introduction**

In the wake of World War II—and the onslaught of Soviet expansionism—the President and the Congress were seeking processes through which other elements of governmental power, in addition to the military, could contribute to the attainment of strategic interests. Thus, the National Security Act of 1947 was born.<sup>1</sup> In enacting this legislation, Congress' intent was to “provide a comprehensive program for the future security of the United States, and to provide for the establishment of integrated policies and procedures for the departments, agencies, and functions of Government relating to national security.”<sup>2</sup> But while the overarching objectives of the National Security Act of 1947 are relatively the same now, as they were then, that is, unified interagency operations, the conditions and scope under which the objectives were developed no longer exist. That is to say, the nature of conflict itself has evolved.

Transnational terrorism, as well as other forms of international crime, affects domestic, regional, and global stability. Translated, these threats to our security include, but are not limited to, the purchase and intended use of weapons of mass destruction, narco-trafficking, human trafficking, money laundering, hard and soft piracy, cyber-warfare, economic as well as other types of espionage, smuggling, bio-terrorism, political assassination, insurgency, fundamental extremism, genocide, illegal immigration, illegal technology transfer, counterfeiting, and chemical terrorism.

The preceding is more than just a simple recognition of transnational threats. The underlying purpose of the list is to demonstrate the multitude of potential variables resulting from so many threats operating simultaneously against our interests. More to the point, we must not view these threats as separate components within a larger category, simply because they do not operate as separate components. In other words, these threats are not just transnational in nature—they are

*trans-networking*. As Stephen Humphreys observes, “...each of these problems has its own history, and, to a considerable degree, can be analyzed separately. But it is perfectly clear, that each is thoroughly implicated in all others and that no one of them can be solved in isolation.”<sup>3</sup> Condoleezza Rice’s perspective is similar. “When you think about it,” she said, “they’re not only transnational, they’re transfunctional, and that means they cross all kinds of jurisdictional boundaries in the government...”<sup>4</sup>

The magnitude, geographical dispersion, and unknown relationships between various transnational threats are such that no one department, agency, or staff has the sufficient resources or expertise to comprehend and respond to all requirements. As our challenges are expanding in size and scope, so too, must our interagency processes be flexible, adaptive, and efficient. To that end, we must develop a system that provides responsive interagency intelligence and information to the appropriate federal departments and agencies. The system must be standardized and enforceable within the federal bureaucracy so as to enhance unity of effort, yet never impinge on the authority of elected or appointed officials. A responsive interagency system that is proficient in both deliberate and crisis action planning is the only method of bringing to bear all the appropriate government assets necessary to engage the full depth and breadth of our national security threats.

The purpose of this research paper, then, is to provide an analysis of the interagency process at the strategic level—from the origins of its inefficiencies to recommendations that directly impact systemic faults. Through historical analysis, this paper will demonstrate that the problems residing within the U.S. federal interagency system are not new, but rather, consistent throughout the timeframe examined. Consequently, recommendations applied to interagency

inefficiencies must take into account many of the historical issues that have set the conditions for interagency coordination failures in the past.

In the end, interagency coordination is about people, organizations, and processes. And only by analyzing interagency problems in the combined context of people, organizations, and processes can we begin to understand the depth and synthesis of the remedies required.

### **Problem: Presidential Autonomy and Interagency Rivalries**

The current U.S. national security apparatus is founded upon the National Security Act of 1947. Since the act was passed into law, the interagency approach to national security problems has been executed through a formal process of identifying policy issues and questions, formulating options, raising issues to appropriate levels for decisions, making decisions where appropriate, and overseeing the implementation of decisions throughout the executive departments.<sup>5</sup> At the presidential level, the interagency process takes the form of the National Security Council (NSC). As a product of the National Security Act of 1947, the National Security Council's goal was to unify interagency approaches to national security issues. The National Security Act of 1947 also made the NSC responsible for the general direction and coordination of intelligence operations.<sup>6</sup>

According to statute, the National Security Council is at the apex of all other interagency groups.<sup>7</sup> It is the governmental body with a common interest in all departments and agencies within the federal apparatus. Its principals include the President, Vice President, Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense. Sitting in advisory positions are the Director of National Intelligence and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.<sup>8</sup> Others may also sit in advisory positions, based upon presidential discretion.<sup>9</sup> With that said, the Council operates according to presidential preference. The NSC system "is at the mercy of particular presidents--to be used,



reshaped, or ignored as they prefer.”<sup>10</sup> In essence, the system has been left open to “each president’s personality, policy preferences, and operating style...”<sup>11</sup> But, while the parameters have provided for presidential freedom, they have also allowed for the dynamics of internal power plays. As Amy Zegart points out, various presidents have designed the NSC system in different ways. Therefore, “its structure, operation, and power are always up for grabs.”<sup>12</sup>

If the NSC is viewed as the tip of the interagency iceberg, the NSC staff is that which falls immediately below the waterline. The bureaucratic depth of the NSC is supported by a substructure of interagency groups and by an NSC staff within the White House. A critical function of the NSC staff is to help guide federal departments and agencies in the understanding and prioritization of the President’s agenda.<sup>13</sup> Influential in every respect, the politically appointed NSC staff endeavors, when practical, to build consensus across the government for unified policy and action.

Apart from authorizing the NSC, Congress does not oversee the interagency process. While critical to effective government, the interagency process within the NSC, and at staff levels below the NSC, has never been codified into law. So, while every President has enjoyed the freedom to mold the NSC and NSC staff in his own likeness, others have seen the disconnect between the President and Congress as a potential fault. As Harold Koh notes, “When Congress enacted the National Security Act of 1947, its greatest error was its failure to address its own role in the national security system.”<sup>14</sup> Still, Congress *can* influence interagency processes by holding hearings regarding past actions and specific participants involved in those actions.<sup>15</sup>

Every new President, either directly or indirectly, influences who some of the personnel will be that will make up his NSC staff. In addition to “by name requests,” NSC staffers are made up of personnel “...detailed from the diplomatic corps, the intelligence community, the civil service,

the military services, academia, and the private sector.”<sup>16</sup> The modern-day National Security Council staff consists of various geographic and functional component staffs, with the two primary committees on the staff being the Principals Committee and the Deputies Committee. The Principals committee is essentially the National Security Council, without the President. The Deputies committee “includes assistant secretary level officials who monitor the work of the interagency policy formulation and articulation process, do crisis management, and, when necessary, push unresolved issues to the Principals for resolution.”<sup>17</sup>

Early on, the intent for the newly activated NSC staff had been one of low-visibility in presidential affairs. However, a dramatic evolution in the primacy of the staff occurred shortly after its establishment. Presidents Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy reengineered NSC staffing processes “that differed radically” from that which was originally intended by the National Security Act.<sup>18</sup> By late 1963, “...the locus of foreign policy-making had moved from the Cabinet to the White House...The President, his National Security Advisor, and the NSC staff had taken the lead in formulating policy, in negotiating with foreign governments, and in managing the daily affairs of state. *The rise of the informal NSC staff paralleled the decline of the formal, statutory National Security Council.*”<sup>19</sup> In other words, the trend was that national security policies were “gravitating” closer to the sphere of presidential staff influence, and further away from Cabinet secretariats/secretariat staffs.

There is historical justification for this “gravitational pull,” however. While most presidents have entered the Oval Office with one form of bias or another regarding the NSC and its associated staff, geo-political events often sway them to centralize foreign policy planning and execution at their levels. That is to say, based on unforeseen events or poor interdepartmental coordination, presidential reactions have been to take personal control by increasing their direct

influence on foreign policy matters while decreasing the influence of other executive branch departments and agencies.<sup>20</sup>

While presidents have felt they were better able to manage the country's foreign policy affairs through centralization, there has also been a parallel history of negative impacts on the interagency process. As the President manages foreign policy through the NSC staff, the NSC staff, by default, rises in prominence. The trend has been for the NSC staff to then become an entity of federal power in its own right. David Rothkopf tells us, that by "exerting its authority, the NSC staff may intimidate or override other interagency players. When this occurs, other interagency players may defer to NSC staff positions and judgments even though they have valuable contributions to make. Worse, still, the NSC staff may not consult them...[and] the quality of options [offered to the President and/or National Security Council] can suffer as a result."<sup>21</sup> The marginalization of the departments and agencies can lead to further idiosyncratic extremes. During several presidencies, the national security deliberation process was sometimes whickered down to levels that challenged the very intent of the National Security Council.<sup>22</sup>

The history of presidential administrations is replete with personality conflicts and interagency rivalries that have ebbed and flowed with departmental power and influence. "The reality" David Rothkopf writes, "is that we see it often—Kissinger vs. Rogers, Kissinger vs. Schlesinger, Kissinger vs. Rumsfeld, Vance vs. Brzezinski, Shultz vs. Weinberger, Lake vs. Holbrooke, and Powell vs. Rumsfeld."<sup>23</sup> Consequently, inter-departmental and agency rivalries develop in reaction to the rise of certain personalities in both the NSC and NSC staff. In one way or another, these personality conflicts have negatively impacted interagency information flow and planning coordination.

### **Problem: Organizational Cultures**

Beyond the personality conflicts and interagency rivalries that exist within the interagency process, there are self-inflicted cultural wounds within the departments and agencies. These organizational idiosyncrasies further handicap inter and intra-departmental coordination processes, ultimately affecting government-wide unity of effort. Consider, for example, the State Department. As Frank Carlucci writes, “The department’s professional culture is predisposed against public outreach and engagement, thus undercutting its effectiveness at public diplomacy and undermining its coordination not only with Congress, but also with other agencies of the U.S. government.”<sup>24</sup>

In response, an aggressive NSC staff will fill perceived State Department voids in the foreign policy process. The situation then exists where multiple elements of government are working issues either redundantly, or, at cross-purposes. Carlucci continues, “An unclear and often overlapping distribution of foreign policy responsibilities and authorities among government agencies and departments—particularly between the Department of State and the President’s National Security Advisor—has undercut coordination of policy development and execution. This has been especially evident when the President has not given the Secretary of State principal responsibility for the implementation of foreign policy.”<sup>25</sup> In the wake of 9/11, the State Department’s influence decreased even further “as the nation and its dominant leaders had little patience for the compromise and delays of diplomacy and as foreign policy itself became militarized.”<sup>26</sup>

The CIA and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) offer other examples of organizational culture crimping the interagency process. The 9/11 Commission Report put it simply when it stated, “Information was not shared...analysis was not pooled.”<sup>27</sup> The CIA and FBI “were

unwilling...to exchange information quickly and effectively...” between their organizations. The CIA did not pass on identified terrorist information to the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the FBI.<sup>28</sup> And because the CIA and FBI “lacked a...cooperative, analytical and operational effort, they were not well configured to detect and counter a threat like that posed on September 11...”<sup>29</sup>

### **Attempts to Standardize Interagency Coordination**

Given the history of personalities and organizations, it should also be remembered that presidents and congresses do not work in a vacuum. To be fair, most have recognized and understood the disconnects in the interagency process, and, to their credit, have attempted to improve the process. With the intent of standardizing interagency processes, President George H. W. Bush’s National Security Directive-1 (NSD-1) established specific authorities for the National Security Council’s Principal’s Committee and Deputy’s Committee. It created the first functional and regional working groups. The idea behind this new NSC staff structure was to “push decisions down and allow the system to work issues as much as possible at the lower levels, while elevating decisions to the Principals’ level later in the process.”<sup>30</sup> Theoretically, this would promote the vetting of details at lower levels so that rapid decisions could be made at the top.

During the Clinton administration, the interagency process for developing and implementing foreign policy was described in Presidential Decision Directive-2 (PDD-2), *Organization of the National Security Council*. PDD-2 expanded the NSC membership beyond that mandated by law. This expansion was based on Clinton’s concept of a link between national security, economic, and domestic political matters. As a result, Clinton’s NSC was to be the principal

means for coordinating executive departments and agencies in the development and implementation of national security policy.<sup>31</sup>

Another key aspect of PDD-2 was the development of the Interagency Working Groups (IWGs). IWGs were a refinement of the functional and geographic working groups designed in President Bush's NSD-1. This aspect reinforced the concept of a lead federal agency and established guidelines for NSC/IWG operations. These guidelines also included what departments and/or agencies would participate in given interagency activities.<sup>32</sup> But because the new Clinton administration lacked some of the sophisticated know-how in establishing strategically-focused staffs, much of the foreign policy process appeared to be *ad hoc*.<sup>33</sup> PDD-2 described an interagency process, but the supporting committees did not reflect the intent.<sup>34</sup> As a result, the implementation of PDD-2 suffered.

The Clinton administration then approached interagency operations on two fronts—the domestic and the international. These efforts resulted in PDD-39 and PDD-56, *Managing Complex Contingency Operations*. PDD-39 was the first time any administration had attempted to centralize control over domestic counterterrorism activities. It acknowledged the type of opponent who recognizes American military superiority, and, as a result, attacks the nation asymmetrically with unconventional means. For the first time, a document was on the street that directed certain government agencies to conduct consequence management. It addressed public health in the wake of a possible mass disaster by including the Department of Health and Human Services under the national security umbrella. It was also the first directive to bring together all relevant agencies for a budget review to see what monies were being allocated to the different departments and agencies.<sup>35</sup>

On an international front, PDD-56 mandated reforms in the political-military planning process for overseas operations. Signed in May 1997, the goal of PDD-56 was to institutionalize procedures for the interagency to follow during crisis action planning. In a departure from previous approaches to interagency processes, PDD-56 sought to involve all potential assets *of* the U.S. government—and *outside* the government—that might be brought to bear on a complex contingency in a foreign land.<sup>36</sup> Armed with lessons learned from contingency operations in the first half of the 1990s, the administration's mindset was that interagency planning can make or break an operation.<sup>37</sup> PDD-56 addressed the interagency framework by directing that crisis action planning would generate

- an executive committee chaired by the assistant secretaries
- an integrated, interagency political-military implementation plan
- an interagency rehearsal
- an interagency after-action review
- training<sup>38</sup>

As a result, PDD-56 became the baseline planning mechanism for, or incorporated into, ongoing operations in eastern Slovenia, Bosnia, Hurricane Mitch in Central America, the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, and the Balkans contingency.<sup>39</sup>

Yet, by 1999, PDD-56's influence was seen as waning. In March of that year, a review of interagency processes concluded that "PDD-56 is intended to be applied as an integrated package of complementary mechanisms and tools...since its issuance in 1997, PDD-56 has not been applied as intended. Three major issues must be addressed to improve the utility of PDD-56."<sup>40</sup> The report recommended increased authority and leadership for promoting PDD-56, more flexible and less detailed political-military planning, and dedicated training resources and greater outreach.<sup>41</sup>

In her analysis of the report, Gabriel Marcella notes, “Imbedded in the three recommendations are the recurring problems of the interagency need for decisive authority.”<sup>42</sup> Contrasting departmental and agency approaches, in addition to divergent institutional cultures (particularly diplomatic versus military), fosters a “nobody in charge” planning environment.<sup>43</sup>

The report to the U.S. Commission on National Security/21<sup>st</sup> Century attributed the lack of government inertia towards interagency cohesiveness to two things. First, though planning may be a core competency for DOD, it is not for other departments and agencies that are untrained or under-resourced for in-depth planning. Second, personnel are not familiar with planning processes outside of their departments and agencies. This is especially the case where the process is seen as incompatible with organizational values.<sup>44</sup>

NSPD-1 addressed the Bush administration’s efforts towards improved interagency cohesiveness. The purpose of this NSPD was to improve shortfalls in the interagency structure. However, no procedural directive followed the NSPD, “...resulting in a situation where there was form but little management application...to effect realistic planning.”<sup>45</sup> An attempt was made to recover from the oversight, but, due to lack of support, the revised NSPD (otherwise known as NSPD-XX) was shelved.

With that said, President George W. Bush did sign into law the *Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act*. The primary thrust of this act is to integrate the intelligence feeds and analysis of 15 separate intelligence agencies across the federal government.<sup>46</sup> To execute the process of tasking federal intelligence sources, and consolidating intelligence at the top, the act created the position of Director of National Intelligence.<sup>47</sup> However, as former Secretary of State Colin Powell points out, the consolidation of intelligence at the top of a hierarchy such as the DNI’s office does not guarantee that State (or any federal department or agency) will get timely



intelligence. Second, the intelligence community, with its overarching emphasis on terrorism, will be directed to focus on “worst case” scenarios. Powell’s argument is that different departments may require intelligence efforts to focus on “most likely” scenarios. As a result, he believes that intelligence needs to be tailored to specific requirements at departmental levels, versus all-encompassing national levels. Lastly, Powell argues that the consolidation of intelligence at the top will affect competitive analysis. Therefore, federal departments (where the expertise resides) should be allowed to enter into the larger analytical process versus higher-level analysis only.<sup>48</sup>

After the U.S. entered both Afghanistan and Iraq without adequate political-military plans, the Congress took action and passed HR 4058, *Stabilization and Reconstruction Civilian Management Act of 2004*. HR 4058 suggests the creation of a National Interagency Contingency Coordinating Group (NIACCG). This group would be a national-level planning and coordination group for post-conflict operations. When activated, the NIACCG would be chaired by the National Security Council and consist of representatives from the departments that are critical to specific missions, such as Defense, State, Justice, Treasury, Commerce, and Agriculture. When planning begins for major combat, the NIACCG would be responsible for providing strategic guidance and coordinating planning among the departments involved in post-conflict operations.<sup>49</sup> As of February 2006, no NIACCG had been established.

### **An Alternative Solution: The Strategic Interagency Coordination Center**

Interagency unity of effort sets the conditions for maximum US federal government effectiveness. This means that agencies not only need to act in concert, but that the effects of their actions must also be coordinated. Without the actions/effects linkages across the federal government, policy becomes disjointed, contradictory, or only partially effective. Individual

federal agency success can be defined as an agency attaining its objectives or even establishing the long-term effects it desires. But strategic success at the federal government level must be defined as the sum total of all its efforts and their resultant long-term effects. For multiple agencies to act in concert successfully, their individual short, mid, and long term effects must be defined and coordinated so that agency under lap or overlap does not negatively impact the larger interagency effort. A process must be in place that tracks individual agency actions *and* effects so as to provide for overall interagency success.

An alternative solution that considers both the history of *interagency disunity*, as well as the requirement to coordinate and track the actions/effects linkages, is the establishment of a Strategic Interagency Coordination Center (STRIACC). This entity would not be an element of, nor attached to, any federal agency, the White House, the National Security Council, or the National Security Council staff. It would be mandated by Congress as a coordination center for the inter-departmental movement of information and intelligence in support of a lead federal agency. In addition to coordinating and tracking information and intelligence flow, the STRIACC would track the effects of actions taken by the separate agencies in support of the lead federal agency. This entity would be established as a strategic mechanism for requesting and moving information and intelligence trans-departmentally in a standardized manner.

The STRIACC's charter would include the establishment and standardization of information and intelligence flow and planning coordination across all federal departments and agencies. It would operate continuously and ensure that all deliberate and crisis action plans generated within the federal government were coordinated with all interagency elements associated with the plan. It would have tasking authority only in that it could demand inter-departmental information and intelligence flow and/or input into ongoing plans (in support of a lead agency). The STRIACC

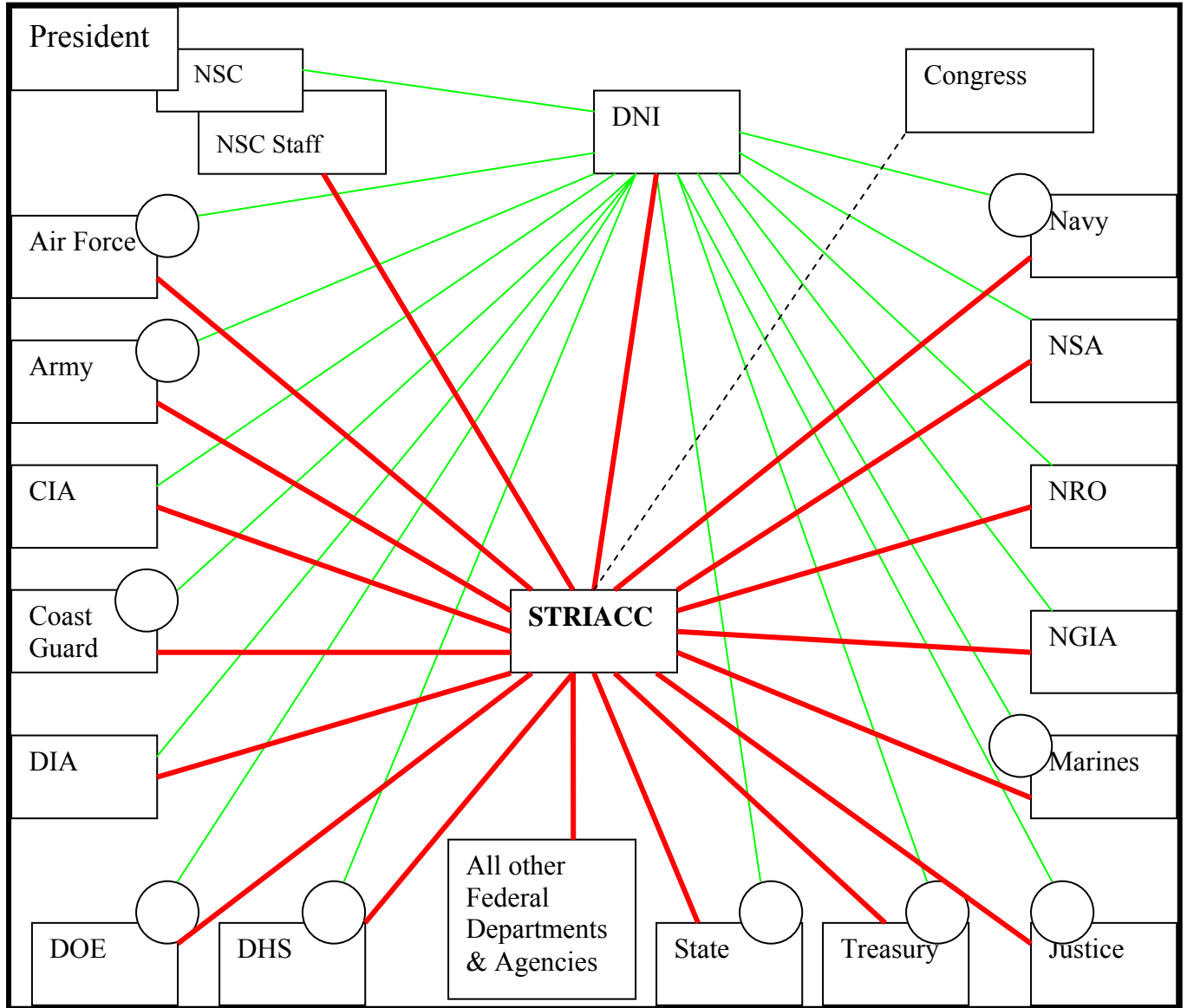
would be manned by civilians cleared for the level of security required, versus detailees from other federal agencies. It would manage its own budget but not interfere with the budgets or operational oversight of any other federal agency. To the extent possible, it would be apolitical in nature and design. The diagram in Figure 1 shows the channels of information flow with the STRIACC as the hub of the interagency planning and tracking support construct. Interagency movement of intelligence as stipulated by the *Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act* is not affected by the STRIACC. However, all lead agency requests for information and intelligence, lead agency-directed planning coordination requirements, and effects resulting from federal agency actions would be executed/tracked through the STRIACC.

The STRIACC provides for a common national security planning structure that establishes, standardizes, and enforces information and intelligence flow, planning standards, and effects-based tracking. Based on congressional mandate, this entity would establish the baseline standards through the reception and institutionalization of PDDs, NSPDs, and congressional input. Thus, it would not infringe upon presidential prerogative or NSC staff turf and would even reinforce presidential directives currently in place. Hiring from outside any established department or agency would reinforce the elimination of organizational baggage that historically accompanies detailees. As a neutral, congressionally mandated entity in support of a lead federal agency, it would reduce or eliminate organizational cultural walls that hamper interagency information and intelligence flow, planning, and coordination. This would be especially advantageous during times of crisis action planning such as the near immediate requirements for unified proactive or reactive global information operations. It would also improve effects-based planning cohesiveness as separate departments plan their operations in support of various national-level strategies. The STRIACC construct allows departments and agencies to work

plans that have roots in both domestic and foreign policies, for example, the Department of Homeland Security and DOD's USNORTHCOM.

The history of interagency operations demonstrates inherent faults in people, organizations, and processes. In light of that history, the STRIACC provides significant advantages. From a standardization perspective, the STRIACC establishes and enforces a specific process of information and intelligence flow across all departments and agencies in the federal government. It also ensures the greatest amount of continuity and institutional memory during presidential administration or senior cabinet member turnover.<sup>50</sup> The STRIACC would have minimum impact on presidential autonomy because it is not a bureaucratic entity co-located with the NSC or NSC staff. The President would still deal directly with Cabinet secretaries or agency directors. The STRIACC would reduce the potential for interagency rivalries, first, because its personnel would be hired from outside any federal agency, thereby reducing the associated departmental baggage addressed previously in this paper. Second, as a neutral coordinating element within the federal apparatus, the STRIACC would not be seen as a mechanism that favored one department or agency over another.

The STRIACC would also reduce planning interference generated by restrictive organizational cultures. It would be mandated by Congress to task, as appropriate, all departments and agencies in support of a lead federal agency. As a result, it would bypass the organizational cultural mindset within separate departments and agencies that discourages interagency activities. The STRIACC would also improve information and intelligence coordination because of its ability to task the Director of National Intelligence as well as all federal departments and agencies to provide intelligence to a lead agency as required. This capability ensures planners across the interagency have the intelligence they need to plan.



**Figure 1**

### **Interagency Information and Intelligence Flow and Planning Coordination Construct**

Squares = the primary federal department or agency

Circles = intelligence sections within the primary departments. Agencies with the primary mission of intelligence do not have separate intelligence sections.

Green lines = new DNI structure as stipulated in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act (appears as thin lines in black and white version)

Red lines = required STRIACC channels for information and intelligence flow in support of lead agency planning (appears as thick lines in black and white version)

Dotted line = congressional oversight

## **Recommendations**

Establishing the STRIACC will enable the U.S. federal government to counter transnational threats more effectively because information and intelligence will flow trans-departmentally in a timely, standardized manner. The capability to coordinate interagency effects promotes an alignment of short-, mid-, and long-term strategy. Further, problems that have historically hampered the interagency process are significantly reduced or eliminated. Therefore, the following congressional actions and changes to the National Security Act of 1947 are necessary.

First, Congress must mandate the creation of the Strategic Interagency Coordination Center. The STRIACC charter would include establishing universal and standardized procedures for interagency information flow, intelligence, and planning. These procedures would include, at a minimum, department/agency planning alerts and notifications, information and intelligence flow formats, timelines, degree of planning content, planning deconfliction methodology, interagency planning performance standards, planning deficiency notifications, in-process reviews, plans dissemination processes, and relief from taskings. Specifically, the STRIACC would be responsible for:

- Establishing data bases/archives for presidential/congressional interagency directives.
- Receiving all executive, legislative, and judicial directives focused on interagency information and intelligence flow and planning.
- Ensuring all federal departments and agencies are updated with executive, legislative, and judicial directives.
- Ensuring government-wide dissemination of lead agency authority and intent.
- Ensuring government-wide comprehension of tasking requirements.
- Building continuity and institutional memory through interagency planning and information flow lessons learned.

- Coordinating crisis action planning and short-, mid- and long-term information and intelligence flow for the lead agency.
- Ensuring the lead agency receives all supporting department and agency information, intelligence, and plans.
- Tracking interagency actions and effects vis-à-vis a lead agency plan.
- Conducting interagency training through information and intelligence flow and planning exercises.
- Conducting yearly reviews of interagency information and intelligence flow and planning operations in preparation for annual congressional review.
- Notifying the appropriate executive and/or legislative branch elements when violations of the mandate occur.

Second, Congress must decree that any federal department or agency receiving an executive or legislative directive from the STRIACC would be required to establish that directive as standing operational procedure until overridden by another directive transmitted from the STRIACC. Finally, Congress must enforce the STRIACC's mandate with yearly reviews of interagency information flow, planning standards, and training requirements set forth in executive and legislative directives.

In addition to the above recommendations pertaining to the STRIACC, the following modifications to the National Security Act of 1947 are suggested. First, the definitions in Section 3, [50 U.S.C. 401a] (4) of the National Security Act of 1947 should be amended as follows: Redefine the term "Intelligence Community" to include all intelligence elements (versus agencies) that fall within the purview of the Director of National Intelligence. Second, the definition of the term "Joint" needs to be introduced into Section 3, [50 U.S.C. 401a] of the National Security Act of 1947, and redefined as follows: Joint is that which "connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc., in which elements of two or more *federal departments or agencies* participate."<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, Titles II and III need to be modified. Section 201 of

title II should include a “Definitions” paragraph to reinforce understanding of the term “Joint” as re-defined above. Title III, (Miscellaneous) Funding of Intelligence Activities, (4) (2) (e) (1), needs to include the specified intelligence gathering elements within specific federal departments or agencies that are networked within the larger national intelligence structure.

In addition, all sections, where appropriate, of the National Security Act of 1947 need to recognize the newly established Office of the Director of National Intelligence. Lastly, all sections of the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act and all DOD publications need to redefine the term “Joint” as recommended above.<sup>52</sup>

Interagency unity of effort is critical if the United States is to adapt to today’s transnational, trans-networking threats. The proposed Strategic Interagency Coordination Center is an element of government that would ensure the timely movement of intelligence and information across the entire federal apparatus, which is *the* key to effective crisis response and comprehensive, effects-based plans. The time to act is now, and not after the next Hurricane Katrina or 9/11 incident.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> John Prados, *Keepers of the Keys* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1991), 29.

<sup>2</sup> The National Security Act of 1947, Sec. 2. [50 U.S.C. 401].

<sup>3</sup> Stephen R. Humphreys, Stephen R. *Between Memory and Desire: The Middle East in a Troubled Age*, (University of California Press, 1999), 261. As quoted by Martin Gorman and Alexander Krongard in their article *A Goldwater-Nichols Act for the U.S. Government: Institutionalizing the Interagency Process*, *Joint Force Quarterly*, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Issue, 2005, 52-53.

<sup>4</sup> David Rothkopf, *Running the World: The Inside Story of the National Security Council and the Architects of American Power* (New York: Perseus Books, 2005), 405.

<sup>5</sup> Gabriel Marcella, “National Security and the Interagency Process: Forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, in *Organizing for National Security*, Douglas T. Stuart ed. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, November 2000), 171.

<sup>6</sup> John Prados, *Keepers of the Keys*, 30. The NSC mandate included ...advising the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security, so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the government to cooperate more



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effectively in matters involving national security...other functions the President may direct for the purpose of more effectively coordinating the policies and functions of the departments and agencies of the government relating to the national security...assess and appraise the objectives, commitments, and risks of the United States...consider policies on matters of common interest to the departments and agencies of the government concerned with the national security...(see Marcella)

<sup>7</sup> See National Security Council statutes.

<sup>8</sup> Changed from the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) as a result of the 9/11 Commission.

<sup>9</sup> For example, President Clinton incorporated the Secretary of the Treasury, the U.S. Representative to the United Nations, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (otherwise known as the National Security Advisor), the assistant to the President for economic policy, and the Chief of Staff to the President.<sup>9</sup> Non-federally employed personnel such as private businessmen can also be incorporated into NSC meetings in the role of counselors.

<sup>10</sup> I.M. Destler, as quoted by Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999), 88-89.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> The National Security Strategy is one example of a successful interagency effort. It is developed through an interagency process with the goal of providing a common language tool that gives coherence to strategic policy. But the interagency process ensures that the NSS is more than just a strategic document--it is also political "...because it is designed to enhance presidential authority in order to mobilize the nation." The staff not only coordinates the development and implementation of policy, it also "...brokers interagency agreements" and provides "...strategy recommendations directly to the National Security Advisor." See Gabriel Marcella, *National Security and the Interagency Process: Forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, as printed in the Strategic Studies Institute book, *Organizing for National Security*, Stuart, Douglas T. ed, November 2000, 176.

<sup>14</sup> Harold Koh, *The National Security Constitution: Sharing Power After the Iran-Contra Affair* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 166.

<sup>15</sup> Booz-Allen & Hamilton, *Road Map for National Security*, United States Commission on National Security, 15 April 2001, Section II, 11.

<sup>16</sup> Gabriel Marcella, *National Security and the Interagency Process: Forward into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 167.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 168.

<sup>18</sup> Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC*, 76.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Eisenhower centralized foreign policy because of disconnects between the State Department, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and other presidential appointees in the wake of the U-2 incident over Russia in 1960. Kennedy centralized foreign policy based on disconnects between the State Department, CIA, and the military during the Bay of Pigs fiasco in 1961. Carter took the controls on foreign policy based on disconnects within the military that resulted in the failed Iranian hostage rescue attempt in 1979. And more recently, disconnects between U.S. intelligence agencies before 9/11, and flawed

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Iraqi pre-war intelligence, have resulted in greater centralization of decision-making processes in President George W. Bush's administration.

<sup>21</sup> David Rothkopf, *Running the World*, 3.

<sup>22</sup> During the Nixon administration, President Nixon was notoriously secretive with his National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger—to the virtual exclusion of all others on the National Security Council. But the “Nixon-Kissinger only” approach to China policymaking (vis-à-vis the Vietnam war) resulted in significant strategic disconnects. The Defense Department, CIA, Vice President, and State Department were all left out of the loop during a critical negotiating period with both the Chinese and the North Vietnamese.<sup>22</sup> The impacts of this omission led to Secretary of State William Rogers and Defense Secretary Melvin Laird resisting cooperation within an NSC system in which they played “second fiddle” to Henry Kissinger.<sup>22</sup> During the Carter administration, Secretary of State Vance “was unhappy and asserted that he had not been consulted...” during certain interagency studies. The findings of the studies led to divisions and resulted in the most bitter rivalries in executive branch history—ultimately leading to Vance's resignation.<sup>22</sup> During the Clinton administration, the CIA and Department of Defense (DOD) felt more and more disconnected from the Oval Office as time went on. “Once again,” Rothkopf reports, “an informal group close to the President was in the driver's seat, and many of those in the administration with the most foreign policy experience were reportedly frustrated in their attempts to be heard.”<sup>22</sup> As for the current Bush administration, many see Vice President Dick Cheney as the most powerful and influential Vice President in the history of the country, many times trumping the rest of the NSC. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld, another strong personality, has been accused of dealing directly with the President and simply bypassing the NSC process.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>23</sup> David Rothkopf, *Running the World*, 194.

<sup>24</sup> Frank C. Carlucci, *State Department Reform: Task Force Report* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 2001), 2.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> David Rothkopf, *Running the World*, 436.

<sup>27</sup> National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9/11 Commission Report*, 2004, 353.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 263.

<sup>30</sup> Booz-Allen & Hamilton, *Road Map for National Security*, Section II, 5.

<sup>31</sup> President William Clinton, Presidential Decision Directive-2, (Washington DC: The White House) 1.

<sup>32</sup> Booz-Allen & Hamilton, *Road Map for National Security*, Section II, p. 9

<sup>33</sup> Booz-Allen & Hamilton, *Road Map for National Security*, Section II, 35. See also the Clinton analysis section in David Gergen's *Eyewitness to Power* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 251-342. Gergen points out the difficulty Clinton had as he adjusted from a state-governorship focus to a national-level focus.

<sup>34</sup> Booz-Allen & Hamilton, *Road Map for National Security*, Section II, 19.

<sup>35</sup> Daniel Benjamin and Steven Simon, *The Age of Sacred Terror* (New York: Random House, 2003), 230.

<sup>36</sup> Booz-Allen & Hamilton, *Road Map for National Security*, Section II, 37-38.

<sup>37</sup> Problematic interventions in the early 1990s included Panama (1989-90), Somalia (1992-94), and Haiti (1994-95). In Somalia, for example, the political-military plan was so disjointed that military forces were actually withdrawing

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while the political mandate was growing. See Hans Binnendijk and Stuart Johnson, *Transforming for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, (Center for Technology and National Security Policy, National Defense University Press, 2004), 20.

<sup>38</sup> Gabriel Marcella, *National Security and the Interagency Process*, 180.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 181.

<sup>43</sup> This point of “nobody in charge” is worth reinforcing because there is more to this than a “lead agency” fix. Lead agencies are designated as overall in charge in any given endeavor. But while one department may be given the lead, the organizational mindsets of the other departments or agencies may be completely disjointed from the lead agency in how they see the problem to begin with. The Department of Defense, for example, has a very set process to planning and executing operations. DOD develops Joint plans that are further refined throughout the department and geographical combatant commands. The effort, whether it has worked all the time or not, is to approach missions with a “soup to nuts” mindset. DOD deploys forces, fights wars, occupies nations, and redeploys forces.

<sup>44</sup> Booz-Allen & Hamilton, *Road Map for National Security*, Section II, 56.

<sup>45</sup> Hans Binnendijk and Stuart Johnson, *Transforming for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, Center for Technology and National Security Policy (Washington, D.C: National Defense University Press, 2004), 109.

<sup>46</sup> Intelligence agencies/departmental intelligence sections consolidated within the new national intelligence directorate include the Department of the Air Force, Department of the Army, CIA, Coast Guard, Defense Intelligence Agency, Department of Energy, Department of Homeland Security, State Department, Department of Treasury, Department of Justice, the U.S. Marines, National Geospatial Intelligence Agency, National Reconnaissance Office, National Security Agency, and the Navy.

<sup>47</sup> See President Bush speech referencing *Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act*, 17 December 2004.

<sup>48</sup> Secretary Powell’s remarks before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, 13 September 2004.

<sup>49</sup> Hans Binnendijk and Stuart Johnson, *Transforming for Stabilization and Reconstruction Operations*, Center for Technology and National Security Policy (Washington, D.C: National Defense University Press, 2004), 110.

<sup>50</sup> Standardization is defined here as the parameters within a fixed process through which all federal departments and agencies request information and build plans. By implication, it also includes a degree of institutional memory and continuity associated with interagency information and intelligence flow and planning. The greater the amount of standardization, the greater is the advantage. Less institutional memory is lost and interagency processes become more efficient.

<sup>51</sup> This is a modification of the current term “joint,” defined in Joint Pub 1-02 as “Connotes activities, operations, organizations, etc., in which elements of two or more Military Departments participate.

<sup>52</sup> In some cases, the current use of the term “Joint” would not be adjustable to the new, interagency definition. For example, the Joint Requirements Oversight Committee would have to be adjusted to read--the DOD Requirements Oversight Committee; the Joint Warfare Capabilities Assessments would have to be adjusted to read DOD Warfare Capabilities Assessments.

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